

REMARKS

Claims 4-14 are all the claims currently pending in this Application.

Claim Amendments

With this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 4, 5, and 12 in order more fully to cover various aspects of Applicants' invention as disclosed in the specification. These amendments are fully supported in the originally-filed specification and figures at least by figures 6 and page 25, lines 6-8. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

Rejections

Claims 4, 5, 8-12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Nakamura (U.S. Patent 4,887,107) in view of Nomura (U.S. Patent 6,978,089). Claims 7, 7, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Nomura and Bradshaw (U.S. Patent 4,969,719). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

None of the cited references, either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest "a light quantity controlling member that ... moves integrally with the first lens group along the optical axis ... and, when the light quantity controlling member is disposed on the optical axis, varies the quantity of object light passing through the taking lens in a direction of the optical axis, wherein the first lens group holding frame retracts the light quantity controlling member integrally with the first lens group into the front lens group side space when the lens barrel is collapsed and advances the light quantity controlling member integrally with the first lens group

onto the optical axis when the lens barrel is extended” as recited in claim 4 (*see also* claims 5 and 12¹).

The light interrupting ring 24 of Nakamura is a light interrupting member for preventing a beam passing the main lens component from falling on the second auxiliary lens component in the retracted position (col. 6, lines 19-40). Thus, the light interrupting ring of Nakamura is distinct from and fails to obviate the claimed light quality controlling member which, when disposed on the optical axis, *varies* a quantity of *object light* passing through the taking lens *in a direction of the optical axis*.

Applicants submit that Nomura and Bradshaw fail to remedy this deficiency. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 4, 5, and 12 are patentable over the cited references and that claims 6-11, 13, and 14 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of the claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

¹ claim 5: “a light quantity controlling member that ... moves integrally with the second lens group ... and, when the light quantity controlling member is disposed on the optical axis, varies the quantity of object light passing through the taking lens in a direction of the optical axis, wherein the second lens group holding frame retracts the light quantity controlling member integrally with the second lens group into the recess section when the lens barrel is collapsed and advances the light quantity controlling member integrally with the second lens group onto the optical axis when the lens barrel is extended”; claim 12: “a first light quantity controlling member that ... moves integrally with the first lens group ... and, when the first light quantity controlling member is disposed on the optical axis, varies the quantity of object light passing through the taking lens in a direction of the optical axis; and a second light quantity controlling member that moves integrally with the second lens group ...and, when the second light quantity controlling member is disposed on the optical axis, varies the quantity of object light passing through the taking lens in a direction of the optical axis, wherein, when the lens barrel is collapsed, the first lens group holding frame retracts the first light quantity controlling member integrally with the first lens group into the front lens group side space, and the second lens group holding frame retracts the second light quantity controlling member integrally with the second lens group into the recess section, and, when the lens barrel is extended, the first lens group holding frame advances the first light quantity controlling member integrally with the first lens group onto the optical axis of the taking lens, and the second lens group holding frame advances the second light quantity controlling member integrally with the second lens group onto the optical axis”.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Application No.: 10/825,673

Attorney Docket No.: Q81050

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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